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The Review of Religions

Editor—A. Q. Niaz, B.A.

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CONTENTS

- **Perfect Religion : Its Characteristics**
  —The Promised Messiah (Translated by Mohd Ali Anwar)
- **The Promised Prophet**
  —Zahur-ud-Din Butt, B.Sc., LL.B.
- **Islam and the Prisoners of War**
  —Khalil Ahmad Nasir, B.A.
- **Christianity and Drink**
  —Ameer Hamza-Yusuf of Borneo
- **Hatless Women in Church**
  —Maulana J. D. Shams
- **The Future of Christianity**
  —Abdul Qayyum Abbas Ahmad
- **Smut and the Fall of France**

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

PERFECT RELIGION : ITS CHARACTERISTICS *

(By the Promised Messiah)

It should be borne in mind that the reality which we call *Mazhab* in respect of one aspect, is as well called *Shariat* from another angle of view. A third name often used for it is *Sirat* ; and it is also called *Deen*. Fifthly, it is called *Millat*, while *Mashrab* is another name for the same thing. And seventhly it is called *Nahla*. All these names keep in view and emphasise various essential aspects of the same reality.

Hence it follows that a religion can be said to be perfect only if it is perfect when looked at from all these seven points of view. As these seven terms completely describe what is known as Religion, and as they are in vogue from the earliest days of the world, the conclusion is irresistible that the excellences of a perfect religion rest on the investigation into the meanings of these seven terms. And those seven excellences in view of these seven terms are as follows:—

1. The first excellence consists in what follows from the significance of the term *Mazhab*, which means 'method of walking.' Thus, the essential trait of a Perfect Religion which lies inherent in the meaning of this expression is that in regard to all human activities and morals it should take its stand on a rational basis ; it must avoid all extremes and never over-step

* Translated from the Urdu original, appearing for the first time in the Ahmadiyya Khilafat Jubilee Number of the 'Al-Hakam', Qadian, dated December 28, 1939 :—M. Ali Anwar.

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the bounds of the 'golden mean.' Just as the physical health of man depends on the balance of physical elements in his body, in the same way the spiritual health of man rests on the regulated and balanced spiritual condition of his being.

Hence, the teachings calculated to place man on the platform of the balanced and regularised condition of his moral qualities and actions, shall certainly be the means of giving him the spiritual health which is craved for most of all.

2. The second excellence is based on the significance conveyed by the term *Shariat*, which lexicographically means 'a clear, bright, trustworthy way.' Hence, a perfect teaching should be such that it shouid contain no darkness, and its sanction should lie in the conviction it brings to the heart, not in force or compulsion ; and matters pertaining to the faith and principles upheld by it should be discernible by the application of the right judgment and unbiassed reason, so that man whose infirmity needs no description, is not placed under the compulsion of a burden beyond his capacity to bear.

3. The third excellence consists in what follows from the significance of the term *Serat*. In Arabic the word *Serat* is used to signify a 'straight path.' In other words, it signifies that all the constituting elements of religion shall be based on firmness and harmony. Thus, a perfect teaching should bear the excellence that its principles do not collide with one another—rather, they should have the characteristic of systematic harmony obtained in the infinite number of points which go to make a 'straight line.'

4. The fourth excellence consists in the significance of the term *Deen*. In Arabic, the word *Deen* signifies 'obedience' and 'reward for obedience.' Hence, a perfect teaching should bear the excellence that it must not only bear the directions for complete obedience, but it should also put forward the promises of best rewards.

And it is to be borne in mind that though the word *Deen* is used to signify 'obedience' and 'rewards for good deeds,' yet secondarily it also means the bad results a man creates for himself by shunning the deeds of virtue.'

5. The fifth excellence consists in what follows from the significance of the term *Millat*. In Arabic the word *Millat* is used to signify 'quick crossing of a passage.' In the same way, a perfect teaching should embody a complete and an all-embracing guidance, the observance of which would hasten the onward march to the goal.

6. The sixth excellence follows from the significance of the term *Mashrab*. The word *Mashrab* is used in Arabic to signify 'drinking place of water.' Hence, according to this significance, the perfect teaching must bear the characteristic that every faculty latent in man finds through it the means for

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the satisfaction of its own thirst. For the human soul which yearns after real salvation and thirsts for true happiness, and cannot be satisfied with anything unreal, should rightly acquire true aversion for any zest in sin and must drink of the purity-giving exquisitely sweet elixir. And human reason which demands rational justification for all beliefs and commandments should find complete satisfaction in it. This is the pure drink in this earthly life alluding to which God says :

و سقاهم ربهم شرابا طهورا۔

i.e., God gives to the true believers to drink the elixir which purifies them of all filths inside.

7. The seventh excellence is to be sought in the significance of the trem *Nahla*. In Arabic, *Nahla* means 'subtle,' 'complex.' It also signifies the 'bee.' Hence, according to these meanings, the excellence of a perfect teaching lies in the fact that it must not fall short of the solution of any of the subtle and complex problems connected with the Unity of God, with true godliness, devotion to God, and with morals. Just as the bee gathers the essentials of a thousand flowers and turns them into honey, similarly a perfect teaching should incorporate in itself the essentials of all the blooms of the laws of nature.

The word *Nahla* also means gratuitous gift vouchsafed out of mere grace. According to this significance, the excellence of a perfect teaching lies in its serviceability to the primary gifts of life like eyes, ears, intellect, reason, spiritual vision (*Kashf*) and revelation (*Ilham*) and all the talents and potentialities inherent in man—all of them being meant for his growth and development. A perfect teaching cannot render any of them inactive, because a secondary gift is always vouchsafed as a matter of grace only, and can be called a gift only when the original favours are not negatived, and they remain intact and in use and are not destroyed.

ربنا تقبل منا انك انت السميع العليم۔

MOHAMMAD ALI ANWAR,

P. O. and Vill. Tatarkandi,
Dt. Mymensingh (Bengal).

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THE PROMISED PROPHET

The Holy Prophet of Islam came in accordance with the prophecies contained in the ancient scriptures. Mark the following in the Bible :

" The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread *him that. fled.* For they fled from the swords, from the drawn swords and from the bent bow and from the grievousness of the war For thus has the Lord said unto me, within a year according to the years of an hireling all the glory of Kedar shall fail, and the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar shall be diminished " (Isa. 21 : 14—17). Kedar was the son of Ishmael (Genesis 25 : 13)

The word is freely used in the Bible for the Arab tribes that sprang from him (Psalms 120 : 5). There is only one person in history whose flight has become a memorable fact as the Era of Fight (the Hejra). It was our Holy Prophet Muhammad of ever green memory who attended by one faithful companion Abu-Bakr fled from the drawn swords of the band of assassins that surrounded his house, and it was after one year from his flight that the glory of Kedar departed in the battle of Badr which took place in the second year of Hejra.

Another prophecy of the Bible is to the following effect :

" Whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, whom God has spoken *by the mouth of all His holy prophets* since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord thy God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me ; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you " (Acts 3 : 21—22) Through Moses Almighty God had warned the Israelites after promising them " a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee," " that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him " (Deuteronomy 18 : 19).

Jesus on whom be peace was equally emphatic. When prophesying the advent of a comforter, he added : " He will guide you unto all truth : for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that he shall speak " (John 16 : 13)

Thus the Holy Prophet's advent was clearly foretold by Moses and Jesus, peace be upon them. The Holy Quran has referred to the above prophecies in the following passage :

And when Allah made a covenant through the prophets—certainly what I have given you of Book and wisdom—then an

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apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must aid him. He said, Do you accept My compact in this matter? They said, we do affirm" (3 : 80).

According to the Bible the Arabs were to be recipients of Divine revelation. It says :—Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit" (Isa. 42 : 11). In this connection another prophecy should also be noted that is met with in Isa. 54 where "the children of the desolate" are given preference above the children of the married wife."

Before the advent of the prophet Jesus, on whom be peace, the jews waited for the appearance of three different prophets. They were Elias, the Messiah and *that prophet*. The prophecy regarding the coming of Elias was fulfilled in the person of John the Baptist. John the Baptist, it is written, came in the power and spirit of Elias. Jesus was the promised Messiah. But what about *that prophet*? That prophet is no other than the promised prophet of Deuteronomy who was to appear from amongst the brethren of the Israelites and that is our Master Prophet Muhammad. May God's choicest blessings be upon him.

A perusal of the Gospels shows that Jesus left his teachings incomplete. The comforter was to guide mankind to *all truth*, and was to come after Jesus was gone. We read : "Nevertheless I (Jesus) tell you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you" (St. John 16 : 7). Again he says :—

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come he will guide you unto all truth, for he shall not speak of himself but whatever he shall hear that shall he speak and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me" (John 16 : 12—13).

Thus the spirit of truth which is the same as comforter, had to guide man to all truth and had to make new and copious additions to the teachings of Jesus. But who is the comforter or the spirit of truth? It is said that the person prophesied about is the Holy Ghost who through the church had to guide people unto all truth. But had not the Holy Ghost already descended on Jesus? Was Jesus throughout his whole ministry without the Holy Spirit? If so, what about the Holy Dove we read of in the Gospels which descended on Jesus? If the Holy Ghost was in him, how could he utter the words "if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Thus it is clear that he who was to come was one who had not appeared before and could not come till Jesus left the world. Jesus called him the spirit of truth, and the comforter,

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showing he would come as a human being as he himself had come (John 14 : 16). The Holy Prophet of Islam is the only person who claims to be the spirit of truth or the comforter. Regarding the Holy Prophet, the Holy Quran says :—

" The Spirit of truth came and the false fled away, the false had to fly." (17 : 81).

An important characteristic of the comforter was that " he shall not speak of himself but whatever he shall hear that shall he speak" (John 16 : 12).

Regarding this the Holy Quran says : " Nor does he, the prophet, speak out of desire, it is not but revelation that is revealed " (53 : 3—4).

The comforter was to guide man to all truth. The Holy Quran says : "This day have I perfected for you your religion."

Thus the Holy Prophet of Islam has guided man to *all truth*. Besides, he delivered prophecies of coming events and cleared Jesus of all the false charges that were levelled against him by the jews and thus fulfilled the prophecy wherein was written, " He shall glorify me."

ZAHUR-UD-DIN BUTT.

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ISLAM AND THE PRISONERS OF WAR

(By Khalil Ahmad Nasir, B.A.)

The question of the prisoners of war has gained much importance in the present disastrous world war. Hundreds of thousands of prisoners are under the control of hostile powers. Europe and America are proud of the fact that their civilization and culture have given them a humane code of laws under which they handle war prisoners in the way a human soul should be treated. But we are entitled to ask the question : Have these present-day laws given a better, more humane and complete guidance to the world as regard the treatment of prisoners of war, or has Islam, in spite of its advent having taken place in the dark era of ignorance ? When we think deeply over the problem, it is gratifying to note that present-day civilized laws have not given anything more to the prisoners than what had already been acquired by them from Islam.

We should not forget that after all these prisoners have for the duration of the war no more position than that of an enemy, because after all they belong to a hostile nation. So when we discuss any teaching about their treatment we must bear in mind that we cannot expect any religion or any law to advise that they should be treated, for example, as the ambassadors of other nations. They must be accorded a treatment in keeping with their status, and this fact being kept in view, Islam gives us a more convincing and more humane teaching.

The students of history are not unaware of the treatment Europe has been giving to the prisoners of war up till the seventeenth century. They were usually made slaves if not killed outright. It is an admitted fact that Napoleon killed four thousand Turks even after promising them safety—on the excuse that he was unable to arrange for their meals or to send them to Egypt. The civilization of eighteenth century took one step forward in as far that the war prisoners were released on payment of a certain fixed amount of ransom. But it was not before the nineteenth century that these inhuman ways of treatment were really discarded and an international law brought into shape. But of what avail? Has it got any more importance than of merely a scrap of paper ? Very substantial and attractive books have been written in favour of the international law. But the footing of this law is only this that it is moulded into any form and turned into any shape beneficial to a party. And, more-

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over, if at all there is any law in regard to prisoners of war and it is followed to some extent, the main reason is that all hostile nations are bound to it under common interest. If one hostile nation is tempted to ill-treat its prisoners, it is aware of the fact that its own soldiers in the captivity of the opposite side would also be treated according to the same measure. So, it is quite natural that the various powers treat prisoners better than they would have done if there were no soldiers of their side in the captivity of the enemy under the constant threat of being handled in the same way.

Having perused the background of the present international law and having noted its importance and its position with the world powers let us have a look at the treatment which prisoners of war receive in actual practice in modern war. It is no more than this that they should be treated by a nation in the same way as it would want the enemy to treat its own soldiers when made prisoners. And this should also be born in mind that a major portion of the expenses incurred over the prisoners is received from the other party after the end of hostilities.

Now, what is the Islamic teaching? Does Islam also demand any sum from the other power as a bill of expenditure over the prisoners? Never. Note the Islamic treatment of kindness and virtue accorded to the captives of Badr and bear in mind that this was done regardless of the ill-treatment at the hands of the Quraish of Muslim prisoners of war who were obliged to remain lying on the extremely hot sand in the scorching sun, with scanty food and little water. And we must remember the prisoners of war in Muslim hands were people who had been the source of the utmost trouble for the Muslims. They were people who had unsheathed their swords with this thought in view that they would completely annihilate the Muslims and exterminate their religion. Their unholy and mischievous intentions were to dye their hands in the sacred blood of the Holy Prophet. They captivated free, innocent Muslims, enslaved and tortured them with the most wicked treachery. Very vile, and most horrible attacks were made on Muslim defenceless women, innocent children and the helpless sick and suffering. In some cases they cut the noses and ears of the martyres and garlanded themselves with these gruesome objects, while in other they killed Muslim ladies by spearing them in their private parts. What can the just opinion of the world be as far as the question of punishing these tyrants is concerned? What would the great powers of even the modern civilized world do, if they were in the same position? I think they will say, " Well, we are going to completely smash away that special ' ism ' and its followers as a punishment to them," and they will not think themselves unjust while doing this. But what was the Islamic way of

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dealing with these most wicked people who were guilty of these most vile and heinous crimes? When they were under the Holy Prophet's control on the day of the fall of Mecca, he said, "I forgive you all; no punishment shall befall upon you." And those taken prisoners were only fighting men actually engaged on the field. They were detained only for the duration of war, and while in captivity, these tyrants, these fiends, were given such comforts and conveniences under the directions of the beloved Holy Prophet that the companions took off their own shirts to clothe these prisoners of war, supplied cooked meals to them while themselves they subsisted on dry dates. They walked without shoes on the hot earth under the scorching heat of the blazing Arabian sun, but they gave their prisoners to ride on their camels and horses. These are the facts which have been admitted even by the critics and enemies of Islam like Sir William Muir.

Now, let us see how the Holy Quran guides the Muslims in this respect. At the outset, let us note what are the Quranic teachings as to how and in what circumstances prisoners of war can be taken. The Holy Quran says :—

> "It does not become the dignity of a prophet that prisoners of war should be captured for him until a battle was actually fought between him and the enemy." (8—68)

i.e. Non-combatants, or even potential combatants who have as yet taken no part in an armed clash can not be taken prisoners of war. No International Code would reduce the extent and number of the prisoners of war to such a narrow range. Islam achieves this clear advantage over the modern civilized laws in teaching its followers to be very careful and take prisoners only in the most unavoidable circumstances of the outbreak of hostilities.

Now let us see how Islam would treat even this lowest possible number of captives. The Holy Quran says :—

> "When the battle has been well fought, take captives from among the enemy. Afterwards you should either set them at liberty without taking any ransom (if circumstances are favourable and you hope matters will mend thereby) or you should release them for a reasonable ransom until the war is over and you are relieved of its burdens." (57—5.)

This verse clearly gives the Islamic teaching on the problem. Only three different courses have been left open for the Muslims as regards the prisoners. They can either be released without taking any ransom money, or on payment of a reasonable ransom, or lastly they can be kept prisoners till the termination of hostilities and till the burden of the war is over. What a kind and gentle and noble treatment has been

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advised by Islam! The foremost two ways are not available in the International Code of the most civilized nations of the present world. A critic may ask why Islam has advised the third course—that of detaining them till the burden of the war is over? But we should patiently observe how the Holy Quran further restricts and qualifies this law. It says:—

> "If you think it necessary to retaliate upon them or take some strong measure against them, then beware that the action you take against them does not exceed the evil that has been done to you, and that you resort not to any measure which the enemy has not been the first to resort to. If, however, it be possible for you to exercise patience, then have patience, for patience is better." (16—127.)

This law will allow Muslims to get work and labour from their prisoners only when the enemy is doing the same with his captives. Any penalty imposed upon the prisoners by the Muslims shall only then be thought just when the enemy had already resorted to the very same measure. And, even in taking the same measure, Muslims are warned not to exceed in any way the limit set by the evil which it is sought to retaliate. And, even in retaliation Islam tells us that the Muslim should not go against the basic injunctions of Islam. That further means that a Muslim power is obliged anyhow to release the prisoners on the termination of war. Islam never permits that any war prisoner should be killed merely on the ground that he is a member of the enemy forces. The Hadith further tells us to be fully careful in not neglecting the comfort and convenience of prisoners and not to exact any work from them which may be beyond their power and capacity (Bukhari).

Now, what was the result and effect of these glorious and most excellent teachings? We have already seen how heartless were the Quraish tyrants. But when treated with such kindness and nobility by the Holy Prophet and his virtuous companions they said,

> "God may bless the people of Medina! They gave us mounts when they themselves walked on foot. They supplied us wheat bread when it was scanty and contented themselves with dry dates."
>
> (Ibn Hisham: 459.)

There were many among these captives, who having been softened by this unique treatment, refused to accompany their friends when they came to get them released by paying ransom. There were many who were set free without any ransom, indeed thousands in number.

(Ibn Hisham: 877.)

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And great was the number of those who, though liberated by the Muslims, were captivated by the truth of Islam, a fact which has not been denied even by Sir William Muir.

Can the modern International Code, in spite of its claims of civilization and culture, compete with Islam in this respect? Has any law been more lenient and more kind? It is Islam only, the complete religion from the Almighty for all ages and all nations, that confers the lasting boon on humanity in this respect also, as in all others. It is Islam and Islam only which can pave the straight and most smooth way to international peace. Islam alone can give a stainless, most brilliant order for every era and for every nation round the globe.

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CHRISTIANITY AND DRINK

By Ameer Hamza-Yusuf of Borneo (Far East).

يسئلونك عن الخمر والميسر قل فيهما اثم كبير و منافع للناس
واثمهما اكبر من نفعهما۔

They ask you about intoxicants and games of chance. Say : In both of them there is a great sin and means of profit for men, and their sin is greater than their profit.—(*Holy Quran: Al-Baqarah*)

Great Britain has to fight three enemies *viz.*, Germany, Austria and Drink of which *drink is the deadliest.*—(*Lloyd George.*)

Drunkenness is not only a sin odious in itself, but it is the root from which many evils spring. It excites the carnal passions in man and leads to wickedness, obscenity, fornication and bloodshed. In it takes place the worst development of all the great vices.

Christians are now learning the evils of many of those things which their religion not only allowed but encouraged. The Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him, tells us that in a vision he was offered two cups, one of milk and the other of wine, that he chose the former and that it was revealed to him that if he had chosen the latter his followers would have fallen a prey to the plague of intemperance. Subsequent events have borne out the truth of this vision. The Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) set his followers an example of total abstinence and the result is that his followers have been, with the Grace of God, free from this pestilence. The Holy Prophet Mohammed (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) led a strictly temperate life from beginning to end. The evil of drink was rampant in heathen Arabia, and though he was surrounded by a people among whom this pestilence raged fiercely, yet he never tasted even a drop of wine up to his death bed. Not only he himself abstained from wine, but having received command from on high, he bade his followers also not to touch it, and we are told that when the prohibition of wine went forth from the mosque at Medina and the crier cried that drinking was prohibited by the Holy Prophet Mohammed (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him), his companions at once broke all their wine pots and the liqour began to flow in the streets like water (Bukhari, Chapter III). He did not go about with a total abstinence pledge asking the Muslims to sign it, as temperance preachers are in the habit of doing now-a-days.

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A single word from his mouth was enough to put an end to this evil once for all.

If Europe and America wish to be delivered from this scourge of drink, let them fly to the Islamic teachings, for in this they will find the real saviour.

Europe and America cannot find in Jesus an exemplar in this respect.

The very first miracle which Jesus performed was the turning of pure water into wine. This miracle was performed on the occasion of a marriage and the marriage party was treated to this newly made wine when it was already drunk. The governor of the marriage feast on tasting the wine, said to the bridegroom, "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse, but thou hast kept the good wine until now (John ii : 10). "This beginning of miracles," the Gospel writer adds, "Did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory." The Gospel further informs us that Jesus was himself in the habit of drinking wine. He himself says: "For John came neither eating nor drinking and they say he hath a devil : The son of man came eating and drinking, and they say: "Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber (Matthew, XI : 18-19) and again he perpetuated the use of wine among his followers by making it an essential part of the holy supper. Matthew says : "And as they were eating Jesus took bread and blessed it, and broke it and gave it to the disciples and said : take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup of wine, and gave thanks and gave it to them, saying : 'Drink, ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament.' Thus, others may take a vow never to taste wine, but a pious Christian cannot do so, for he must partake of it when taking the holy Sacrament. The king of England may order that no wine be admitted into any of his palaces, but the Archbishop of Canterbury cannot issue such an order with respect to the churches.

In short, if Jesus had acted as the Holy Prophet Mohammed (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) did, Christendom would not have been deluged with intoxicating liquors as it is now. Temperance preachers preach against the use of intoxicating liquors not because Jesus preached against it, but because experience has brought home to them its horrible consequences. They have witnessed its ravages and are therefore doing their best to put an end to it. But intoxicating liquors have got such a firm hold on Christian people that all the attempts of the temperance societies have utterly failed to check their rising tide. This is apparent from the drink bill of the principal Christian nations of the world.

Tons of spirits and other fiery substances are being consumed, to burn their own stomachs, lungs and hearts, instead of burning

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down the Axis Powers. If what the Allies spend on liquor were applied to make explosive bombs to burn an Axis country instead of burning down their own lungs, it might end the war in months only instead of years.

In short, the drink evil is one of the greatest calamities that have befallen the Christian nations, and though they have now become alive to its horrible consequences, yet it has come to have such a firm hold on them that nothing short of a miracle can free them from its tight grip. Individuals and associations have been doing their utmost to fight the demon of drink, but to no avail. The outbreak of the present war has made the great Christian potentates realise, that before the enemy could be overpowered, it was necessary that the great foe at home, viz., *drink* should be conquered.

The Tzar of Russia was the first to realise the danger of drink and he promptly issued orders prohibiting vodka ; then came France with the prohibition of absinth. Germany too has found restriction necessary. Next came Great Britain with a terrific indictment. Lloyd George, one of the greatest men in British politics, was quoted as saying :— *We are fighting Germany, Austria and drink, and so far as I can see the greatest of those three deadly foes is drink.*" He added, " We have a great conviction based on accumulating evidence that nothing but root and branch methods would be of the slightest avail." Example is better than precept. How much better would it have been if the Western people had been followers of the Prophet of Arabia, Mohammed (peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) !

There is not the least doubt in what Lloyd George has said. Great Britain has to fight three enemies *viz.*, Germany, Austria and Drink, of which *drink is the deadliest.* Pre-Islamic Arabia was deluged with drink, but when Islam made its appearance above the Arabian horizon, the drink evil vanished. Like the Arabs, the Europeans are continually at war with one another and like them too they are groaning under the yoke of drink. Let them, like the early Muslims, embrace Islam with all their hearts, and history will repeat itself. Those that are now enemies will turn into friends, and not only the evil of drink but all other evils that are so rampant in Christian countries will disappear.

It appears not only from the objections brought against Jesus by the Jews, but also from a close study of the Gospels that Jesus used wine throughout his life. It is for this reason, I presume, that drinking is a necessary element in the sacrament known as the " Lords' Supper." Jesus himself confessed his drinking of wine when he said of John that he did not drink but as to himself he quotes words used by others to describe him : " a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber," which denote that he took wine. (Luke 7 : 33).

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In fact it has never been contested that Jesus was addicted to the habit of drinking. Of all the evils that have wrought the destruction of societies and made a hell on earth, none comes up to wine in its pernicious effect. Examples illustrating the ruin and havoc which intemperance has wrought are innumerable.

It is with a sense of deep regret that I have to remark that this inadvisable permission in regard to drinks has rendered the moral teachings of Jesus Christ a practical failure.

" Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also " (Matt. 5 : 39) are words which, without going to the depth of their meaning and practical applications, seem no doubt plausible on the surface, but the question is whether a drunkard can follow the rule ? Will he not, enraged on being offended, outstep the limit even of " a tooth for a tooth " and take out four for one ? Similarly the Gospel rule that whosoever look on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matt. 5 : 28) is good and without doubt commendable in appearance, but no normal man can admit that a drunkard, with his carnal passions highly excited by strong drinks, can keep his looks chaste. The truth is that such a boisterous fellow is apt in the state of intoxication to commit the most detested and horrible crimes all unscrupulously. Teachings therefore which contain verbal injunctions against crimes but open wide doors as to their causes and give full permission for indulgence in them, can hardly establish a man with firmness on the rock of purity.

In contrast with this erroneous treatment of the moral diseases I am bound to mention the wise measure suggested by the Holy Quran. On the one hand, it has struck at the root of the evil by strictly forbidding the use of the intoxicating liquors, passing censure upon wine and *declaring it as the deadly enemy of righteousness and purity.* For the protection of the eye and the heart from unchaste looks and bad ideas it has, on the other hand, enjoined matrimony.

Jesus Christ made free use of wine and never took a wife. Now I believe that Providence protected him from evil, but I cannot admit that under these circumstances he could be as perfect in the purity of heart and in spotlessness of character *as the person who remained a total abstainer throughout his life and had also a lawful wife.*

The lessons which the Christians have learned after 1900 years of drunkenness and the difficulties with which their way is beset, are attracting them towards the teachings of the Holy Quran.

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The most important part of the work of a prophet, the true reformer of his people, consists of finding out and trying to remove the causes and sources of evil. When these are rooted out, the effect shall cease of itself and the flood of sins which breaks up and all barriers shall thus be dammed up.

Here do we draw the line between the Holy Quran and the New Testament. The one has ignored the causes and sources from which evil springs and has flattered itself with a few statements containing moral teachings which can never pass from the domain of the theoretical into that of the practical.

The other like a wise and far-seeing doctor and a true sympathiser of humanity has, in the first instance, applied itself to remove the causes of sin and sapped the foundations of evil and moral depravity. This is the point to which we must draw the attention of gentlemen who boast so much of the high moral teachings of the New Testament. It cannot be contended that the Gospel teachings have encouraged morality by declaring the lawfulness of wine which is the open enemy of mercy, justice, forgiveness piety, righteousness, and all the noble, moral qualities to which man can aspire.

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HATLESS WOMEN IN CHURCH

(By Maulana J. D. Shams, Imam of London Mosque).

On November 7th, 1942, the following statement was published in the London press :—

" Hatless Women in Church."

(" Official Approval of the Episcopate ")

" Questions are frequently asked in these days concerning the old customary rule that women should not enter a Church building with their heads uncovered. The scriptural authority behind this rule is St. Paul's regulation, but this required that they should be veiled. That has long ago fallen out of use, and after consultation with the Bishops generally we wish it to be known that no woman or girl should hesitate to enter a church uncovered, nor should any objection to their doing so be raised."—*Times.*

This statement caused a controversy among the Judges Mr. Justice Croom-Johnson asked a girl who appeared hatless as a witness in his Court, " Have you a hat ? " " No," replied the girl.

The Judge said, " Borrow one. Take the oath with a hat on." The girl left the court, returning with a hat. Then she took the oath covered, and the Judge told her, " Now you may take the hat off." The girl proceeded to give her evidence hatless.

Mr. Justice Hilberry insisted in the King's Bench Division on November 16 that a woman witness should wear a hat. Some days later, Mr. Justice Croom-Johnson at Kent Assizes said : " To keep women from court because they have no hats is ridiculous." He added that he preferred women to wear hats when taking the oath.—*Evening Standard.*

The question was later raised in the House of Commons, and the Attorney-General pronounced the invalidity of the clause *re.* the wearing of hats by women in court.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I wrote a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, a copy of which was also sent to

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the Archbishop of York. I reproduce below the correspondence :—

Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury

14th November 1942.

Sir,

I have read with great interest your statement *re.* allowing women and girls to enter a church with uncovered head. Surely, this is contrary to St. Paul's regulation ?
(See I Corinthians XI).

May I put the following questions to you, sir ;

I.—Are the ordinances and regulations of the New Testament subject to abrogation ?

II.—If "yes," who has the right to announce their invalidity? Did not Nazis themselves do the same thing ?

III.—Were the ordinances mentioned in the Epistles intended only for the addressees, or were they for people of all ages ? If the latter, then, in my humble opinion, it would be contrary to Ecclesiastical Law to abrogate them. St. Paul, in introducing this law, has said : "Be followers of me even as I am also of Christ.....and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you."

IV.—The regulation of St. Paul is as follows : "The head of woman is Christ ; and the head of the woman is the man and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head uncovered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head ; for that is even all one as if she were shaven.....For a man indeed ought not to cover his head forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God ; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man ; neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man."

If the above reasons given by St. Paul were and still are true and right, then the regulation certainly would be still valid. Otherwise, its abrogation would be tantamount to falsifying the reasons as well.

V.—Will it be objectionable, in view of your statement, if men prayed in church with their hats on ?

I trust that you will find time to answer these questions.

Yours sincerely,
J. D. SHAMS,
Imam of the London Mosque.

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Reply

Lambeth Palace, S.E.I.
London, 19th November 1942.

Dear Sir,

The Archbishop has received your letter of November 16th. You will understand that owing to the pressure of work his Grace cannot reply personally or in detail to his many correspondents. He would say, however, with regard to the wearing of hats in Church, that what St. Paul contemplated was women leading in prayer and, in any case, his instructions were that they were to be veiled.

Yours faithfully
IAN K. WHITE-THOMSON,
Chaplain.

Letter to the Chaplain

27th November 1942

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your letter of 19th November. But I am afraid that it fails to answer my questions. If we accept the view that St. Paul's instructions were that the women were to be veiled, then a true follower of the New Testament would make a point of keeping it up, otherwise the same questions, which I have already put in my first letter, would arise. You will excuse me if I say that St. Paul's instructions were not for women leading prayer, but for every woman. The women, as he has mentioned in the same Epistle, and in I Timothy, cannot lead the prayer as they are not allowed to speak in a church nor even to ask any question. These are his words in this connection : "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (I Timothy Ch. II).

Again, he says: "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law. And if they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What came the word of God, out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

(I Corinthians, Ch. 14 : 34-7).

This passage shows clearly that to abrogate these commandments means to abrogate the commandments of the Lord. If

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any woman is not prepared to wear a hat out of obedience to the commandment of the Lord and go to a church for prayer, do you think she would pray with sincerity if she were allowed to enter the church with uncovered head? In my humble opinion, the cogent reason for their deserting the churches is their having no faith in Christianity.

I should be obliged if you will kindly put my observations on the view adopted to justify the statement, before the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Yours faithfully,
J. D. SHAMS,
Imam of the London Mosque.

Reply to Above

Lambeth Palace,
Landon, 2nd December 1942.

Dear Sir,

I have brought your letter of the 27th November before the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he asks me to say that he has nothing further to add to what was said in my letter of November 19th.

You will understand, I am sure, that owing to very heavy correspondence, his Grace cannot undertake to answer, in detail, all the letters which he receives.

Yours etc.,
IAN K. WHITE-THOMSON.

The statements, and the answers to my letters, clearly show that they no longer have faith in the New Testament as the Divine Commandments of God.

The Sunrise.

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THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

By Abdul Qayyum Abbas Ahmad

The Master Prophet Mohammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, when describing the signs for the second advent of the Messiah, said that one of his main works would be to break the Cross.

It is obvious that the basic work of God's Chosen Messengers can not be to go to every church in every city, in every country, and break the wooden and metal Crosses used therein. The real meaning of the expression used by the Holy Prophet, evidently, is that the Promised Messiah, supported by Almighty God with sound and weighty argument, will break the power of the Cross as the world-wide, recognised symbol of Christianity.

When Hazrat Ahmad came as the Chosen Mohammadi Messiah, at that time the Cross dominated all over the world. The political power of the nations professing Christianity was supreme everywhere. Christian missionaries offered to new entrants a very easy and hopeful life in this world as well as in the next, for they were well supported financially; and naturally they gained converts in thousands wherever they went in a world bent on material gain.

Hazrat Ahmad at once realised the whole situation and applied himself to the task of exposing, on historical and Biblical basis, the falsity of the view that Jesus Christ had died on the Cross—the fundamental error upon which the whole of Church Christianity is based. He proclaimed to the world that Christianity could not stand against Islam because the Islamic principles were the only methods to the eternal benefit of man, and the only true and right way for him to know his Creator. He said that this religion was the only religion that satisfied all the natural requirements of man and provided instruction and guidance for every walk of life. He wrote scores of books in support of this claim, offering substantial prizes to any one who could refute the arguments he had advanced in favour of Islam.

So many years have passed since these prizes were offered but no one has dared to come forward to claim them. And in those very days Hazrat Ahmad, having been so informed by God, declared it to the whole wide world that Christianity had been shaken to its roots and that before long it would lose its hold upon the minds of men, and would cease to exist as a dominating religion.

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Now, a simple glance over the world situation to-day is enough to show that those who profess to believe in Christianity have certainly declined in their belief in its principles. From the pulpit we are often told now-a-days that the younger generations are neglecting their spiritual connection with Christianity. A famous writer, Hiliare Belloc says, " Our civilisation, *i.e.* the civilisation of Christendom...has arrived at a crisis where it is in peril of death [1]."

Furthermore the same author writes, " I next propose to show how it became disunited and thereby spiritually enfeebled while materially progressing, until at last, with the destruction of moral tradition by which it has precariously maintained its hold, it lost its very principle of life and may, therefore, unless we return to that principle, dissolve [2]."

How true are the observations of this penetrating writer! Christendom has indeed lost its very principle of life. Nowhere in the lands where Christianity is professed can we find any one following the insructions and the moral code provided in the New Testament. The modern young Christian has totally strayed away from the path which the Church orders him to follow.

Some days ago the Church of England decided that girls are to be allowed in the churches bareheaded. This is an example that the clerical authorities have been forced to change the heavenly laws. And this has been done so that the growing and coming generations of girls may not stop going to church altogether if it continued to insist upon women having their heads covered while under the roof of a church. It is impossible to imagine a more clear example of the weakening hold of Christianity upon the modern mind.

How true were the words of the Promised Messiah!

1. " The Crisis of our Civilisation," p. 1.
2. *Ibid.*

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SMUT AND THE FALL OF FRANCE

[Condensed from the " Hibbert Journal," London]

Hamilton Fyfe

More than fifty years ago, at the height of his fame as an outstanding English essayist, Matthew Arnold foretold the downfall of France.

He gave as the reason for her ultimate fall, the fact that France was suffering from a dangerous disease.

" If the disease goes on and increases," he wrote, " then things will go from bad to worse with her. She will more and more lose her powers of soul and spirit, her skill in council, her formidableness as a foe, her value as an ally."

France's value as an ally, and her formidableness as a foe, have certainly been questioned since the tragic day when Hitler marched his troops past the Arc de Triomphe. And in the minds of not a few people today, there is as little question about the contributing factors in France's fall, as about the fact that she has indeed fallen.

The disease to which Arnold referred is that of lust ; that of over-stimulation of sex, of pornography, and of general lewdness. Arnold was right when he said of this vice that : " Once admitted and fostered, it eats like a canker and with difficulty can ever be brought to let go its hold again, but for ever tightens it. Hardness and insolence come in its train ; an insolence which grows until it ends by exasperating and alienating everybody ; a hardness which grows until the man at last can scarcely take pleasure in anything outside the service of his goddess . . . ."

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the symptoms which in present-day France are revealing themselves as a devastating disease, were already apparent to those who looked closely for them. Chiefly in the character of the popular plays, and novels and in the press, were the most noticeable signs to be found.

Since the war the disease has spread (as such a disease will always spread in any country at war) and the readers of popular French novels, the spectators at the plays, and the

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millions who read the press, are, to quote Arnold, " under a malign influence."

In one important respect, however, Arnold has been proved wrong. It was not the masses of people in France who presaged their country's downfall through their immorality, sexual over-indulgence and lewdness, but a small minority. A minority among the leisured classes, among the politicians, the army leaders, some writers and a few artists This small minority however were in a position to dictate, to produce, and to revaluate that which was fed to the masses of people through the notoriously corrupt press, through reactionary and false politics, the decadent stage and the pornographic novels.

While in many instances the " masses " were disinterested there remained those who, through lack of education, moral weakness, unemployment, lack of adequate inspiration in any truly productive field, fell prey to any and every suggestion for eroticism which presented itself.

With the advent of war, this disease spread. Fear, promiscuity, danger, threatened personal relationships; lack of security—all these tend to either strengthen or disrupt the basic qualities of a human being. In France, because for so long, much of her literature has been given over to those phases of life which have to do with the sexual relationship and the gratification of mere physical appetite as opposed to the exercise of the creative faculty, and the encouragement of spiritual values—the disease has shown itself to be virulent indeed.

Under the " protection " of the banner of war this diseas. now seems to be affecting far more areas than France alone A London newspaper recently declared that " the war has brought about a great change in British authorship . . . you see openly sold now " raw novels " that a few years ago, would have raised an outcry.

Novels which proclaim by their covers and jackets the order to which they belong are put forward to attract attention. The sale of one of the " rawest " of these has now passed 200,000 copies.

That is a bad sign. There are always plenty of worshippers ready to bow the knee to the goddess of Lust, if given sufficient opportunities, and those who know the consequences of such worship should prevent those opportunities being multiplied and made easier. —*Magazine Digest.*

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